



Planning Board

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Linda K. Hamlin, Chairman
Steven A. Heikin, Clerk
Robert Cook
Sergio Modigliani
Jonathan Simpson
Mark J. Zarrillo

Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Room 111, 1st Floor, Brookline Town Hall

January 14, 2015 – 8:15 a.m.

Board Present: Linda Hamlin, Steven Heikin, Robert Cook, Sergio Modigliani and Mark Zarrillo

Staff Present: Polly Selkoe, Alison Steinfeld and Dan Bennett

Public Present: Chobee Hoy, Craig Bolon, Grace Kim, Min Song and Arden Reamer

Development Team: Pip Lewis, Debra Collins, HMFH

Linda Hamlin called the meeting to order.

INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE DEVOTION SCHOOL BUILDING by HMS Architects

Polly Selkoe explained the Building Commission and application process to MSBA. She introduced the architects, Pip Lewis and Debra Collins.

The architects presented the existing conditions and the proposed plans. [See plans dated 1/14/2015.]

Steven Heikin suggested that the smaller playground near Harvard Street should be included on site plan shown to the public.

Linda Hamlin asked about parking.

Currently there are 55 garage spaces which will be increased to 65 spaces; approximately 10 spaces will need to be added to the on-street program.

Mark Zarrillo asked if the multi-purpose room had a sloped floor.

Pip Lewis responded no because a flat floor has more flexibility for different uses and is otherwise not eligible for MSBA reimbursement.

Mark Zarrillo asked about the art rooms which are facing south.

Debra Collins explained teachers wanted them facing the courtyard.

Pip Lewis described the setback assumptions, which included only Harvard Street as a front. Dan Bennett explained that the site has two fronts, both Harvard and Stedman, so the 25' setback applies to Stedman as well as Harvard. Mr. Bennett indicated that relief will be needed for FAR, parking and setback.

Steven Heikin said one member of the architectural committee was concerned with the north wing being angled and thus closer to Stedman Street. He explained it was done to open up the courtyard and break up the long façade on Stedman Street, and he thought it was an improvement.

Serigo Modigliani and Linda Hamlin also liked the wider courtyard.

Linda Hamlin liked the school floor plan with the center axis having a view of the backyard.

Sergio Modigliani liked the relationship of the angled wing to the Devotion house and the improved layout of the south side courtyard.

The architect showed the façade alternatives:

1. Panelized curtain wall with screened garage. He suggested it be a green wall and said it is referred to as the "office park scheme."
2. Masonry, brick or terra cotta, reflecting the color of the existing yellow brick façade.
3. Making the wings look like glass boxes and/or make 1/3 of the end of the wing closest to Harvard masonry.

Linda Hamlin stated that it is a complicated building and suggested simplifying it. She is more in favor of making certain sections of the building more special and important. Also she cautioned that a white façade would get dirty. She likes opening up the courtyard.

Sergio Modigliani commented that the pre-K classrooms have tall ceilings. The architects responded that this space may be used for mechanicals. They are trying to keep mechanicals off the roof.

Mark Zarrillo noted that the Stedman side façade could be based on use. He suggested creating an image for each stacked classroom and science space. He also noted that the entrances don't stand out. A theme is needed. He suggested unifying the Stedman façade with a screen. A floor

plan diagram for circulation and entrances would provide a more-user friendly plan for the public. He recommended simplifying the building plan scheme by minimizing the number of colors for different uses.

Steven Heikin suggested an additional image, which would show a blow up of the central administration space.

Sergio Modigliani suggested continuing the proposed Option A overhang of the upper 2 floors over the lower 2 floors all the way around the building and to the rear, switching to a 3 floor under a single floor at the gym elevation. This shadow device may help organize the tall façade to the rear.

Steven Heikin suggested there is a lack of coherence around the building. He asked what material should the fins be if the façade is brick. The fins almost feel like blinders on the windows. The façade goes from being highly articulated with sunscreens to a flat surface. He noted that the building does not have pure north-south orientation, but is turned on a 45 degree axis to north, so the use of sunscreens vs unprotected glazing on various elevations needs to be carefully considered, perhaps involving the use of some screening or similar vertical elements on other elevations to increase the consistency of the design approach.

Steven Heikin thought Option C looks like the building belongs in Santa Fe, not New England.

Mark Zarrillo felt the front façade is treated like a modern version of a Georgian style building.

Sergio Modigliani suggested that: the knuckle expression is key for the design; that an architectural vocabulary for the Babcock St. wing could inform the rest of the building; and there is a lot of surface area that needs to be designed.

Debra Collins stated that it is difficult to have all glass on the Babcock wing because of classroom needs.

Linda Hamlin said the all panel system doesn't work well in the rear.

Debra Collins explained that it might need sun-shade systems on some of the rear façade as well.

Sergio Modigliani and Linda Hamlin suggested celebrating or distinguishing the main rear stair; the secondary stair is now distinguished and perhaps shouldn't be.

Sergio Modigliani encouraged section drawings for the community meeting to better show the relationships of the site grades to the building design and to the heights of the larger interior spaces.

Steven Heikin asked if a greenhouse area (which parents have requested) could fit next to the gym over the first floor rear corridor.

Linda Hamlin said the rear corridors are not very visible on the elevations.

Sergio Modigliani explained that, on 3/6/2015, the plans the architects have at that time go to the two Cost Estimators.

Steven Heikin asked if the architect would get estimates of different façade treatments to inform the cost discussion.

The Board discussed costs, budgets and the process with the architects, emphasizing the need for flexibility.

Mr. Modigliani asked how they plan for mechanical space, when you don't know what the systems will be.

The architect said that the Building Commission indicated last night that it is unlikely for the building to be geothermal. The Devotion School Building Committee needs to indicate whether the design should go in that direction. Mr. Modigliani indicated his view that it should be considered only if it would provide a positive return on investment, since it adds to the building's first cost.

The Board and architects discussed likely HVAC systems, and other related information. They also discussed the next steps in the process, including the Community Meeting on 1.29.15 and the MSBA submission deadlines in April.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

Materials Reviewed During Meeting

Staff Reports

Plans and Design